



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501

MEDIA ADVISORY

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(951) 777-3162 (electronic version available at:

<http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/media/media.shtml>)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT ANNOUNCES U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS AND BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT AWARD TO IMPLEMENT VETERANS COURT.

Riverside County: Riverside County Superior Court is pleased to announce that it has been awarded \$350,000 to be disbursed over the next three years to implement and support a Veterans Court.

The Veterans Court, overseen by the Honorable Mark Johnson, is an 18 month intensely supervised collaborative program between the court and: the Riverside County District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation and Mental Health Departments; Loma Linda Veterans Administration; Riverside Police Department; and Children and Family Futures. Veteran mentors volunteer to work closely with veterans in the program and have become a critical component of the program. It is the desire of all partners to increase public safety while improving the lives of veterans and their family by healing the physical and invisible wounds of those who have entered the criminal justice system as a result of their dedicated service.

The program provides treatment and other services to veteran offenders through four phases, in order to reduce crime and substance abuse, by utilizing the established best practices (National Association of Drug Court Professionals) Ten Key Components of drug courts already in place and the seven evidence based design features identified by the National Institute of Justice.

The objectives are to build a program that ensures veterans are identified and assessed for risk and need early in the process. The program will also ensure all clients receive evidenced based and data driven services, while providing ancillary services that prevent recidivism and achieve long term recovery. The program will also lower costs associated with this population of focus by reducing recidivism and track all client performances through an automated data system.

Veterans Court will make efforts to improve the identification of veterans within the criminal justice system at the time of arrest or shortly thereafter through inquiries by law enforcement personnel or appointed counsel.

Funding will be used to enhance the programs ability to test for drugs and alcohol, client transportation, interim housing, program evaluation and additional probation support. It is anticipated that 65 veterans will be served with these funds.